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Leaders Under 40: Dane Lemeris

Dane Lemeris, senior vice president, Holborn

How did you get to where you are today?

My start in the industry was at Aon, beginning with internships in London and Boston, followed by a full-time tenure in their Boston office. That experience prepared me for my transition to Holborn in New York City. Currently, my primary focus is acting as a strategic partner to our clients, placing reinsurance programmes for a diverse range of regional, super-regional and national insurers. Beyond the transactional side, I advise our clients' leadership teams on broader strategic initiatives. Internally, I am deeply committed to the culture at Holborn, spending significant time mentoring and training the exceptional new generation of talent we have onboarded in recent years.

What first drew you into insurance?

I was drawn to the intellectual diversity of the reinsurance sector. It is a field where no two days look the same. To be effective in this industry, you must synthesise information from a variety of disciplines. One moment you are analysing the accounting mechanics of a reinsurance programme, and the next you are diving into meteorological data to understand storm seasons. Whether it is economic theory, political shifts or contract law, this industry challenges you to constantly expand your worldview. It is that intersection of complex problem-solving and tangible real-world impact that keeps me inspired.

What do you enjoy most about your job, and why?

Without question, it is the people. At Holborn, we operate on a relationship-based model, and I consider it a privilege to work alongside such high-calibre clients. There is a unique reward in sitting on the same side of the table as a client, working collaboratively to solve their most complex problems. Furthermore, getting to do this work supported by colleagues who are among the brightest and most dedicated in the business makes the challenges enjoyable. The sense of shared success is what drives me.

What challenge has shaped you the most?

Navigating the post-pandemic landscape reinforced a critical lesson: despite rapid technological advancements, this is still fundamentally a human business. The challenge was resisting the industry's drift toward purely transactional, remote interactions. I made a conscious effort to double down on face-to-face relationships not just with clients, but with reinsurers and colleagues. I learned that the most successful professionals are those who can leverage modern data and technology without losing sight of the trust and empathy required to build long-term partnerships.

What are you aiming for next in your career?

A retired colleague once gave me advice that serves as my professional north star: 'Focus on the client, and the rest will fall into place'. My career path isn't tied to a specific title, but rather to the quality of service I provide. My goal is to continue identifying emerging issues, connecting the dots for our partners and ensuring Holborn's clients are resilient in a volatile market. If I can consistently solve problems and add value to those relationships, I would consider that a success.

How do you stay motivated and keep learning in such a fast-moving market?

Motivation for me comes from the understanding that our industry is never static. Despite a sometimes traditional public image, the insurance sector is constantly evolving to address new risks, from climate variability to cyber threats. I make it a priority to learn something new every single day, whether through industry research or, more often, by leaning on the vast institutional knowledge of my colleagues. At Holborn, we foster a culture of continuous education, where staying curious is a requirement for success.

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